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can read between the lines of the Memorials and Decrees. It was really a usurpation of the throne. The authors with no lack of humor remark that "it was clear (and there were many voices to reassure her of the fact) that the stars in their courses were looking for the continuance of her unfettered authority, and that any trifling assistance which she might have given them would not be too closely scrutinized." This trifling assistance, after the death of the father of her son, included the degradation of the Empress Consort, the death of her own son, the ostracism of the son's wife, the neglect of the unborn child, the appointment of the next Emperor (and the appointees were always infants who must have a regent), the death of Kuang-Hsu's wife, the imprisonment of Kuang-Hsu, probably his death, the death of the Empress Consort, not to mention the host of ministers and advisers who were beheaded or invited to commit suicide. The history of her times sheds new light on many problems which have puzzled the Occident, such as the suicide of Wu K'o-Tu, the reform of 1898, the *coup d'état* of 1898, the Boxer movement, the status of Li Hung Chang and the appointment of the present Emperor. The concluding chapter sums up the characteristics and life of this remarkable woman, who, although she broke many of the tenets of civilization from the western point of view, must be judged as one of the great women of history.

R. M. BROWN.

Palestine and its Transformation. By Ellsworth Huntington. xvii and 443 pp., map and illustrations, appendix and index. Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, 1911. \$2.

As is well known to readers of the *Bulletin*, the author has had seven years of Asia, but his trails in the Holy Land were all of the year 1909. He threaded the little land fairly in every direction; across Philistia, Judæa, over the Ghor to Moab, Gilead, Jebel Druze, Damascus, Palmyra; to Petra in the south, across the Ghor again south of the Dead Sea to the parched land of the Negeb as well as through Samaria, Galilee and the Lebanon. He has the art of travel and accepts all situations. "In the cool, invigorating air of the spring afternoon we rode to Hebron, highest and most flourishing of Judæan cities—a pretty place, set on a tongue at the junction of two valleys and looking down the main fertile valley." But equally, "arriving at Beni Na'im we found the village deserted, for all the inhabitants had removed to the harvest fields, as is their custom in summer. After sleeping in the streets, we resumed our way."

Of adventures there is rarely more than a hint. A "good fortune" lost them in the eastern wilderness of Judæa and sent them stumbling down the cliffs to grope about the reedy, mucky plain until 10 at night, when Jericho was reached. When a couple of Druzes cover him with their rifles, his companions get their revolvers ready, "but as I had none all I could do was to tell Abdullah to say 'go to, this is unseemly, better put up your guns or you'll get into trouble.'"

They struggle with head winds on the inhospitable east shore of the Dead Sea in their little canvas boat, only to have to draw it up on the rocks and find their food and water spoiled by the bitter waters that have washed in. The hardships of wandering off the beaten tracks in such lands are often hinted at but never enlarged upon.

Huntington found Palestine interesting, very, but not beautiful, save in the momentary delight of glimpsing the sown land on some return from the desert.

We are shown the reason for the exclusiveness of the Jew in the topographic isolation of his land, which is further traced to its roots in material and geologic structure. The contrast between Jew and Phœnician is an admirable sample

of the work. Both dwell on narrow highlands at the east end of the Mediterranean. One race, north of Carmel, has wrought out its history on a fragment of the earth's crust that had suffered gentle subsidence beneath the sea long before history began, so that it invaded every valley and made a coast of alternating bays and promontories with some sort of shelter for ships. The land itself was all rugged mountain and valley, nowhere lacking views of the sea on which the rough slopes descended, to which every gorge and valley opened, and beside which lay all the towns. The call of the sea resounded forever throughout Phœnicia and the people fared forth to know the world and mix with its peoples.

In this sinking of the Phœnician shore Carmel was a sort of hinge point. To the south the shore rose instead of sinking and put between Judea and the Mediterranean a fifteen-mile-wide strip of ancient sea floor, brought to light in the uplift, its edge straight, harborless and quickly cliffed by the waves, the more to part the Jew from the sea. East of this smoother belt, beyond the cuesta of the Shephelah, lies the flat-rock plateau of Judea, 3,000 feet above the sea, its border cut by the rushing rains into the deep, crooked defiles that are the only path from below. Thus the Jews lay aside from the life of the world effectively a race set apart.

"In Judæa . . . many a village and almost every hilltop brings with it a sense of space and of being at the top of everything. . . Scores of other villages give rise to the same feeling. Perhaps it is in part imagination but my companion felt likewise. It cannot be wholly imagination, for our host evidently loved the view: and few men are so dull that they fail to be thrilled with some slight stir of feeling when they stand looking down on all the world at sunset."

After the charming narrative and mingled with it comes Huntington's new presentation of his doctrine of Dry Epochs. Unusual drought in the desert drives its nomad inhabitants for very life to the agricultural border land. Then civilizations are overwhelmed by hungry swarms of desperate men. Of old, thousands of years ago, climates were wetter than now, and the change came not gradually but in sudden decades of acute drought, followed again by centuries of moister years. Two of these crises of aridity fell in 1200 B. C. and 700 A. D., two periods of chaos in history for lands neighboring the desert. "Three eras make up the tale of history. Three great pulsations the course of climates during the same period. The eras and the pulsations agree in time. The first era comprises the hazy past when Egypt and Babylonia were at their greatest. It ends with the chaos of the Aramæan migrations. The second spans the life of Israel in Palestine, the Greeks in their islands and peninsula, Italy in the most western of the great lands of antiquity and Assyria and Persia far to the east. It also ends in chaos with the migrations of the Barbarians and the Mohammedans."

The plea for this doctrine will not convince everyone, but Huntington's readers have not in the past needed to be convinced to enjoy his writing. This book leaves us ready for more.

MARK JEFFERSON.

Persia in Revolution. With Notes of Travel in the Caucasus. By J. M. Hone and Page L. Dickinson. xiv and 218 pp., map and illustrations. T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1910. 2s. 6d.

Persia in Revolution is a brief and somewhat unsatisfactory account of a trip from Warsaw to Baku to Teheran, with an excursion into Trans-Caucasia.